

PUBLIC PREVIEW:

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED LATER IN PRIVATE

Cabinet Member(s)	As appropriate
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	As appropriate
Officer Contact(s)	Mark Braddock – Democratic Services
Papers with report	None

HEADLINES

Summary	<p>A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.</p> <p>This will enable Cabinet Members to openly discuss such matters generally in public, and via the Council's live broadcast of the meeting, without prejudicing their later consideration in private.</p>
Putting our Residents First Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026	<p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: An efficient, well-run, digital-enabled council working with partners to deliver services to improve the lives of all our residents</p> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of: A Digital-Enabled, Modern, Well-Run Council</p>
Financial Cost	As set out in the report.
Relevant Select Committee	As set out in this report under each item – however, this item is not for scrutiny call-in as it is information only.
Ward(s)	As set out in the report

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet note the reports to be considered later in private and Part 2 of the Cabinet agenda and comment on them as appropriate for public information purposes.

Reasons for recommendation

Why are certain reports considered in private?

As a transparent, democratic organisation, the Council's Cabinet will consider matters in public on Part 1 of this Cabinet agenda. However, there will inevitably be some reports that will need to be considered in private. These would generally relate to contracts, property transactions or commercially sensitive information, for example, tender bids from commercial organisations, which if made public, could prejudice the Council's ability secure value-for-money for resident taxpayers.

This information is also called 'exempt' information and is considered in Part 2 of any Cabinet agenda by applying the relevant section of the Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), in that the report contains certain information and that the public interest in withholding that information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

How can the public find out more about the private reports?

To ensure maximum transparency when the Cabinet considers such private reports:

- 1) They are first given advance notice on the Cabinet's Forward Plan in summary form setting out the reason why they will be considered in private. The [Forward Plan](#) is a public document setting out all the expected decisions the Cabinet will make over the coming year, except those that are urgent, and is available on the Council's website to view;
- 2) This report provides a fuller public preview of the matters to be discussed in Part 2 of this Cabinet meeting and gives an opportunity for Cabinet Members to highlight issues of significance within and for public information purposes, without prejudicing their later fuller consideration in private. It also sets out the recommendations in general terms that are being proposed for a decision on.
- 3) Consideration of this report will also be broadcast live on the Council's YouTube channel: Hillingdon London, and available for viewing afterwards, for wider democratic engagement.
- 4) After these private reports are considered in Part 2 of this Cabinet meeting, Cabinet's full decisions on them will then be published on the Council's website the day after the Cabinet meeting, along with the decisions on the other matters already considered in public.

Alternative options considered

Cabinet could resolve to release any private report into the public domain in extraordinary or highly exceptional cases, where it considers the public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in withholding it. However, to ensure greater transparency on all private matters considered, this public preview item is advised as the most suitable way forward.

Legal comments

Such private matters are considered in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) Access to Information provisions and also The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. This report enables such matters to be discussed in public as far as is possible under the relevant legislation.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

ITEM 9 - VOID CONTRACT VARIATIONS AND STRATEGIC RESPONSE TO HOUSING TARGETS

Relevant Cabinet Members	Cllr Bianco - Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property Cllr Tuckwell - Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Growth
Relevant Ward(s)	N/A
Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure

Information

The Council is proposing changes to its contracts for repairing and refurbishing empty council homes (“voids”) to meet higher standards and address increased demand. This is part of a broader effort to improve the quality and safety of council-owned housing across the borough.

Why are Changes Needed?

- **Rising Demand:** More properties are becoming vacant and require significant upgrades before new tenants can move in.
- **Higher Standards:** The Council is committed to meeting the Regulator of Social Housing’s target—reducing the number of homes that don’t meet “decent” standards to just 4% by March 2028.
- **Comprehensive Upgrades:** Many homes now need full refurbishments, including new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, and doors, not just basic repairs.

Who Benefits?

- **Residents:** Improved housing quality and safety, with faster access to upgraded homes.
- **Vulnerable Groups:** Support for residents who need to move due to serious property issues (like damp, mould, or fire damage).
- **Community:** More affordable housing becomes available, reducing the need for temporary accommodation and supporting the Council’s buy-back program.

ITEM 10 - PROVISION OF VOUCHERS INCLUDING FOOD AND ESSENTIAL GOODS SUPPORT SCHEME

Relevant Cabinet Members	Cllr Susan O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education
Relevant Ward(s)	N/A
Relevant Select Committee	Children, Families & Education

Information

The Council is proposing to continue the Government-backed voucher scheme to support residents in need. This report seeks to award a commercial contract to provide this. This initiative provides vouchers for food and essential goods to eligible households, helping families, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers, and people with disabilities. The scheme is fully funded by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), meaning there is no cost to the Council or local taxpayers.

How does it work?

- Vouchers are distributed to low-income households, including those with children eligible for free school meals and those identified through Council services.
- Families with children receive meal vouchers during school holidays, while other eligible households can apply online or be referred by Council teams.
- The scheme is managed through a secure online portal, making it easy for residents to access support.

Why is this important?

- The scheme helps residents live active and healthy lives by ensuring access to nutritious food and essential goods.
- It supports thriving, healthy households and aims to reduce the impact of rising living costs, especially for vulnerable groups.

Who is eligible?

- All wards in Hillingdon are covered.
- Eligibility is based on household income, benefit status, and referrals from Council services.
- There is a focus on supporting those most affected by financial hardship, including people with disabilities.

ITEM 11 - DOMESTIC GAS SERVICING AND BOILER INSTALLATIONS CONTRACTS

Relevant Cabinet Members	Councillor Jonathan Bianco, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property
Relevant Ward(s)	N/A
Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure

Information

The Council is proposing to align the end dates of its two main contracts for domestic gas servicing and boiler installations, allowing for a single, unified procurement process in the future. The Council is legally required to maintain safe gas installations in its housing. This proposal ensures compliance with safety regulations while delivering better value and service for residents.

Key Benefits for Residents and the Community:

- **Financial Savings:** By combining the contracts and extending the current agreement, the Council expects to save money, with the potential for even greater savings if more boilers are installed.
- **Operational Efficiency:** In the future, managing one contract instead of two will streamline processes, reduce administrative work, and make it easier to deliver services.
- **Improved Service Continuity:** Any agreed realignment will ensure there is no gap in essential gas servicing and boiler replacement services, supporting the Council's commitment to safe, reliable, and energy-efficient homes.
- **Resident Wellbeing:** The programme will help residents live in warmer, safer homes with lower energy bills and reduced carbon emissions, supporting both household wellbeing and environmental goals.

ITEM 12 - CLEAN & WASTEWATER SERVICES CONTRACT

Relevant Cabinet Members	Councillor Jonathan Bianco, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property
Relevant Ward(s)	N/A
Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure

Information

The Council is proposing to award a new four-year contract for clean and wastewater services for its corporate (non-household) sites, following a competitive process.

Why is this contract important?

- Continued Service: The current contract ends in April 2026. Without a new contract, the Council would face higher costs and lose added-value services.
- Cost Efficiency: The proposed new contract is projected to reduce supplier margins and improve efficiency through consolidated billing and better contract management.
- Ensures use of Market Competition: Since 2017, councils can choose their water supplier, encouraging better value and innovation.

How was the proposed contract procured?

- A working group of several London boroughs and Hertfordshire County Council collaborated to develop the tender.
- The procurement was managed by LASER Energy Buying Group, ensuring compliance with public sector regulations.
- Tenders were evaluated on quality of service, added value, pricing, and social value.

What are the benefits for residents?

- Clean water: available at council premises
- Better Value for Money: The proposed contract aims to keep water costs low for the Council, which helps protect public funds.
- Active Water Management: The proposed contract includes measures to use water more efficiently.
- Environmental Focus: The proposed contract supports the Council's environmental goals, including carbon reduction and improved leak detection.

ITEM 13 - PLANNING, BUILDING CONTROL AND LAND CHARGES IT SYSTEM

Relevant Cabinet Members	Cllr Eddie Lavery - Finance and Transformation Cllr Steve Tuckwell - Planning, Housing and Growth
Relevant Ward(s)	N/A
Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure

Information

Hillingdon Council is proposing to upgrade its core IT system for planning, building control, and land charges. The current system needs to be replaced because the supplier is ceasing to trade, and the legacy system will soon be unsupported.

The proposed new system, if approved, is expected to provide:

- Modern, Digital Services: a fully digital, 24/7 platform for residents, businesses, and professionals to access planning, building control, and land search services.
- Improved Accessibility: Residents can view and comment on planning applications, access supporting documents, and track decisions online—anytime, from any device.
- Faster, Transparent Processes: Enhanced search tools and interactive maps make it easier to see what's happening locally. Weekly lists of new applications, decisions, and appeals will be available, keeping residents informed.
- Streamlined Building Control: Applications, payments, and inspection requests can be submitted and tracked online, reducing delays and improving service consistency.
- Clear Enforcement & Appeals: Residents can submit enforcement complaints, track progress, and view appeals directly through the portal.
- Environmental Information: Tree Preservation Orders and land charge information will be accessible online, speeding up property transactions and supporting environmental awareness.
- Empowering Communities: Open data and interactive features allow residents to participate more easily in local planning and stay engaged with neighbourhood developments.

This proposed upgrade supports Hillingdon Council's ambition to be a digital-enabled, well-run council that puts residents first. It aligns with the Council's Digital Strategy to improve service delivery, efficiency, and accessibility for all.

ITEM 14 - CORPORATE DISPOSALS PROGRAMME 2025/2026: GARAGES DISPOSALS STRATEGY

Relevant Cabinet Members	Councillor Jonathan Bianco, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property
Relevant Ward(s)	Borough-wide
Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure

Information

The Council is proposing to sell thirty-nine underused garage sites across the Borough or transfer them to the Housing Revenue Account for creating additional social housing. Many of these garages are vacant or no longer suitable for modern vehicles, and maintaining them would require significant investment. By selling these sites, the Council aims to:

- **Generate Capital for Community Investment:** The sales will raise funds to help meet the Council's financial targets. These funds can be used to support essential services and reduce the need for borrowing.
- **Support New Housing Opportunities:** The sites have strong potential for residential development. Selling them could lead to the creation of new homes, helping to address local housing needs and reduce the demand for temporary accommodation.
- **Improve Council Efficiency:** By focusing resources on better-performing assets and reducing the number of vacant or unlettable garages, the Council can operate more efficiently and deliver better value for residents.
- **Minimal Impact on Residents:** Most of the garages are already empty or not fit for use, so the impact on current residents and communities is expected to be minimal. Any proposals for development would require the usual planning consent and consultation.

This refreshed garage disposal strategy supports the Council's commitment to being a modern, well-run organisation. It ensures public assets are used in ways that best serve the community, both now and in the future. The approach also aligns with the Council's legal obligations to achieve best value for public property.

ITEM 15 - CORPORATE DISPOSALS PROGRAMME 2025/26 - FORMER SOUTH RUISLIP YOUNG PERSONS CENTRE, SOUTH RUISLIP

Relevant Cabinet Members	Councillor Jonathan Bianco, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property
Relevant Ward(s)	South Ruislip
Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure

Information

The Council is considering the sale of the former South Ruislip Young Persons Centre, located on Victoria Road, South Ruislip. This building, previously used for youth services, is now vacant after services were relocated to more accessible locations as part of the Council's updated Youth Delivery Strategy in 2023. No other Council service has expressed interest in using the property, so it is proposed to be declared surplus to requirements.

Key Points:

- Purpose of proposed sale: The property is no longer needed for youth or other Council services. The proposal to sell will allow the Council to focus resources on facilities that better serve current needs.
- Open Market Disposal: It is proposed the site will be sold on the open market, aiming to ensure the Council achieves the best possible value for residents. The money raised from the sale would help meet the Council's capital receipts target for 2025/26, supporting investment in local services and reducing the need for borrowing.
- Minimal Impact: As the building is already vacant, any sale will have minimal impact on local residents and service users.

ITEM 16 - CO-MINGLED DRY MIXED RECYCLING CONTRACT

Relevant Cabinet Members	Cllr Wayne Bridges – Cabinet Member for Community & Environment
Relevant Ward(s)	N/A
Relevant Select Committee	Residents' Services

Information

The London Borough of Hillingdon requires a contract for the collection, sorting, processing, and marketing of recyclable materials. Following a competitive procurement process, a new contract is proposed to be awarded for this function, which takes place at a Materials Recycling Facility.

The Council itself provides weekly recycling collections to approximately 120,000 households and 1,400 businesses, handling an estimated 17,652 tonnes of recyclable materials per annum which varies year on year depending on recycling performance.

The proposed contract supports Hillingdon's ambition to be a carbon-neutral, sustainable borough and by improving recycling rates and reducing waste sent to landfill. It is also designed to meet upcoming national waste and recycling reforms, ensuring Hillingdon remains compliant with new regulations and can adapt to future changes in recycling requirements.

**ITEM 17 - CORPORATE DISPOSALS PROGRAMME 2025/26 -
LAND AT MICAWBER AVENUE, UXBRIDGE**

Relevant Cabinet Members	Councillor Jonathan Bianco, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property
Relevant Ward(s)	Colham and Cowley
Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure

Information

The Council is proposing to sell the freehold of the land and buildings at Micawber Avenue, Uxbridge. The site, previously leased to The Scout Association, is now vacant and in poor condition.

Key points:

- The property is not currently in use and is recommended to be considered surplus to the Council's requirements.
- The buildings are in disrepair and not suitable for letting without significant investment.
- The proposed sale of the site will help the Council meet its financial targets and support local services.
- The property's sale, if agreed, will have minimal impact on residents, as it is currently vacant and unused.

The proposal to sell the land ensures unused assets are put to better use, potentially continuing to serve the community, while helping to fund essential local services.

ITEM 18 - CORPORATE DISPOSALS PROGRAMME 2025/26 - FORMER SKILLS HUB SITE, PROVIDENCE ROAD, YIEWSLEY

Relevant Cabinet Members	Councillor Jonathan Bianco, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property
Relevant Ward(s)	Yiewsley
Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure

Information

The Council is proposing to sell the former Skills Hub site at Providence Road, Yiewsley. This site was previously used as a secondary school for students unable to attend mainstream education. The main school operations moved to a larger, improved facility at Falling Lane in December 2022, and the remaining workshop is no longer required on the site and the premises is expected to be fully vacant by early 2026.

Key points:

- The site is no longer needed for educational purposes. If agreed, there will be no loss of educational provision for young people, as services have already been relocated to a better facility.
- Selling the property will generate a capital receipt, which will support the Council's budget and help fund essential services for residents.
- Any sale will eliminate ongoing costs for security, maintenance, and reduce risks such as vandalism or squatting. It would also have minimal impact on local community activities, as the site has been mostly vacant since 2022.
- If agreed, the Council will market the property openly, ensuring a fair and competitive process that achieves the best value for taxpayers.
- Any future redevelopment or reuse by the new owner could bring new housing, jobs, or community facilities, depending on planning outcomes.